

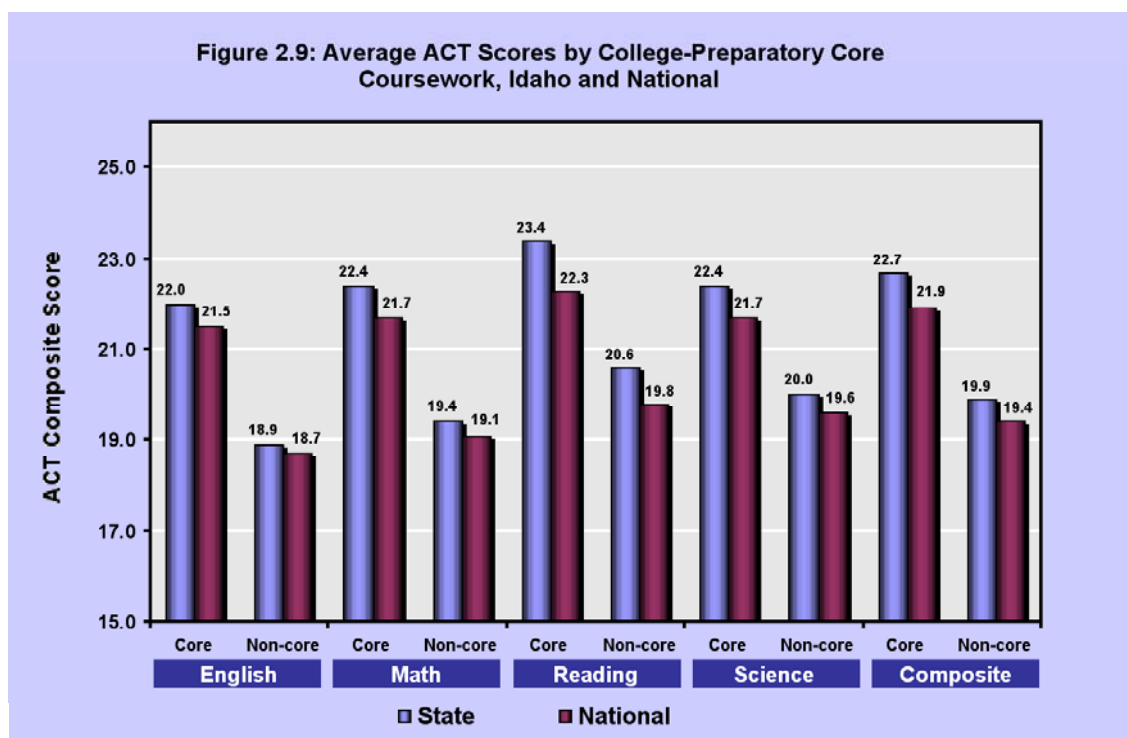
August 18, 2004

## Idaho students remain above national average on college exam

Idaho students who take challenging high school courses continue to score higher on a national college entrance exam, according to ACT results released today.

### Preparation pays off for students

Overall, Idaho Class of 2004's scores remain above their U.S. counterparts on the ACT. Students in Idaho and across the United States who perform best on the ACT are those who report completing at least four years of English, three years of math, three years of social sciences and three or more years of natural sciences. In Idaho, students with that academic background had an average score of 22.7 compared to a 19.9 average score for their counterparts in the state with less preparation.



Idaho law requires eighth graders to create a plan for high school and post-high school studies that parents must approve. Law requires that the plans be reviewed and updated annually.

Superintendent of Public Instruction Marilyn Howard said the student plan is a great opportunity for parents to help their child prepare.

“I invite parents to review their children’s plans carefully and to encourage them to focus on going beyond the minimum required for graduation. Choosing a challenging academic schedule will prepare them for success in college,” Howard said. “The ACT research shows that the extra effort in high school pays dividends in college and in life.”

Students are not required to take the ACT to graduate from high school. Generally high school students who plan to attend college take the test at their own expense.

## Performance of groups

The ACT results for the Class of 2004 also continue to show a performance gap among Hispanics, Blacks, and Native American students when compared to the performance of all students.

## Overall performance

In Idaho, higher education institutions require applicants to submit scores from either the ACT or the SAT. The majority of the Class of 2004 – about 57 percent – took the ACT.

**Figure 1.3: Idaho and National Average ACT Composite Scores by Race/Ethnicity, 5-Year Trends**

		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
<b>All Students</b>	<b>State</b>	21.5	21.5	21.2	21.2	21.3
	<b>National</b>	21.0	21.0	20.8	20.8	20.9
<b>African Am./Black</b>	<b>State</b>	19.5	18.6	18.8	17.2	17.4
	<b>National</b>	17.0	16.9	16.8	16.9	17.1
<b>Am. Indian/Alaskan Native</b>	<b>State</b>	18.8	18.2	18.8	18.3	18.6
	<b>National</b>	19.0	18.8	18.6	18.7	18.8
<b>Caucasian Am./White</b>	<b>State</b>	21.6	21.6	21.4	21.4	21.4
	<b>National</b>	21.8	21.8	21.7	21.7	21.8
<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>State</b>	18.6	18.2	18.0	18.0	18.3
	<b>National</b>	18.9	18.8	18.4	18.5	18.5
<b>Asian Am./Pacific Islander</b>	<b>State</b>	21.6	21.7	21.5	21.0	21.5
	<b>National</b>	21.7	21.7	21.6	21.8	21.9
<b>Other/No Response</b>	<b>State</b>	21.8	21.9	21.8	21.3	21.8
	<b>National</b>	21.2	21.2	20.3	20.6	20.9

Idaho students averaged a 21.3 total score that compares to the national average of 20.9. Both scores are up slightly from a year ago. Idaho students also outpaced the nation in the subject areas tested: English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning.

During the past five years, Idaho scores have consistently been higher than the nation overall and for each subject area. The chart below shows how Idaho students scored on the ACT subtests and the test as whole during the past five years:

**Figure 1.1: Idaho and National Average ACT Composite and Subject Area Scores, 5-Year Trends**

		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
<b>English</b>	<b>State</b>	20.7	20.7	20.4	20.3	20.4
	<b>National</b>	20.5	20.5	20.2	20.3	20.4
<b>Math</b>	<b>State</b>	20.9	21.0	20.9	20.8	20.9
	<b>National</b>	20.7	20.7	20.6	20.6	20.7
<b>Reading</b>	<b>State</b>	22.1	22.0	21.9	21.9	22.0
	<b>National</b>	21.4	21.3	21.1	21.2	21.3
<b>Science</b>	<b>State</b>	21.5	21.5	21.3	21.1	21.2
	<b>National</b>	21.0	21.0	20.8	20.8	20.9
<b>Composite</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>21.5</b>	<b>21.5</b>	<b>21.2</b>	<b>21.2</b>	<b>21.3</b>
	<b>National</b>	<b>21.0</b>	<b>21.0</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>20.9</b>

###